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ABSTRACT

Building on an earlier study, this paper presents the findings of a series of studies that asked senior newspaper editors throughout the United States how they view newspaper coverage of issues of concern to gays and lesbians. The paper presents detailed findings reported in four earlier papers analyzing data from the survey: "Daily Newspaper Coverage of the Gay and Lesbian Community: Perceptual Differences of Senior Editors and Their Gay and Lesbian Staffers"; "Privacy and the AIDS Crisis: Newspaper Practices Regarding Obituaries and Outings"; "Tolerance of Senior Daily Newspaper Editors for Photographs of People with AIDS and Gays and Lesbians"; and "Newspaper Coverage of Gays and Lesbians: Editors' Views of Its Longterm Effects." The paper presents a new study regarding senior editors' views about indicating sexual orientation in news columns. The paper discusses how the results from these studies might be used in generating more accurate and comprehensive coverage of events and concerns of the lesbian and gay community. The paper concludes with an outline of tentative plans for a study of daily newspaper coverage of gay and lesbian communities and of gay and lesbian and "mainstream" readership of those dailies in 23 U.S. and Canadian cities. (RS)

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SENIOR NEWSPAPER EDITORS AND DAILY NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF THE GAY AND LESBIAN COMMUNITY: A SUMMARY OF PAST FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF NEW FINDINGS ON REPORTING SEXUAL ORIENTATION

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SENIOR NEWSPAPER EDITORS AND DAILY NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF THE GAY AND LESBIAN COMMUNITY: A SUMMARY OF PAST FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF NEW FINDINGS ON REPORTING SEXUAL ORIENTATION[1]

Introduction

The Human Resources Committee of the American Society of Newspaper Editors in April 1990, published a pioneering study of the perceptions gay and lesbian journalists hold of their newspapers as work environments and of their newspapers' coverage of the gay and lesbian community.[2] This ASNE study began the process of evaluating how well newspapers serve the large, politically active, well-educated and economically significant community of gays and lesbians by surveying reporters and editors who are gay or lesbian. The 205 gay and lesbian journalists who voluntarily participated in the ASNE study indicated they have mixed feelings and are uneasy about their roles in newsrooms. Many also were critical of how their newspapers cover issues of concern to the gay and lesbian community.

The present study, which has generated several papers, builds on the ASNE study by asking senior newspaper editors throughout the United States how they view newspaper coverage of issues of concern to gays and lesbians. To determine how divergent are the views of senior editors who decide on coverage from those of the lesbian and gay journalists ASNE studied, the survey instrument for the present study included 26 items from the ASNE survey. These items asked respondents to judge their newspapers' coverage of issues, concerns and events important to gays and lesbians and to evaluate the language they preferred to use in that coverage. This survey also included additional items designed to reveal the views of senior editors regarding privacy questions involved in daily newspaper coverage of lesbians and gays: the use of photographs of lesbians or gays showing affection for one another

and photographs of people with AIDS, inclusion of the names of surviving partners in obituaries, coverage of outings, and identification of sexual orientation in news columns.

This paper summarizes findings the authors have reported in earlier papers analyzing data from this survey, concentrates on new findings regarding senior editors' views about indicating sexual orientation in news columns, and discusses how results from this study might be used in generating more accurate and comprehensive coverage of events and concerns of the lesbian and gay community. Finally, this paper outlines tentative plans for a study of daily newspaper coverage of gay and lesbian communities and of gay and lesbian and "mainstream" readership of those dailies in 23 U. S. and Canadian cities.

Method

The sample of 450 senior editors for this study was drawn from a list of the nation's 1,575 daily newspapers, arranged in descending order of circulation. This list, provided by Editor & Publisher, first was divided into ten segments, with each segment representing ten percent of the total daily newspaper circulation in the United States. Forty-five managing editors, associate editors, city or metro editors and news editors were selected from the dailies included in each segment of the list. Those newspapers with large circulations obviously contributed more than one senior editor to the sample. Similarly, only one senior editor from several papers was selected for the sample from the segments with dailies having small circulations.

Each of the 450 senior editors selected was notified by letter and received a call requesting participation. Eventually 227 editors from 202 daily newspapers completed the 25-minute telephone interview. Those interviewed included 71 managing editors, 95 city or metro editors, 30 news editors and 31 other senior editors; 180 were male and 47 were female. They

averaged 40.6 years of age, had an average of 17.2 years of newspaper experience and had completed an average of 4.6 years of education beyond high school. Of the 227 editors interviewed, 141 had completed a journalism major. Interviews for this study were conducted between February 28 and May 10 of 1991 by trained interviewers from the Bush Research Center at Ohio University's E. W. Scripps School of Journalism.

Findings

Findings Reported in "Daily Newspaper Coverage of the Gay and Lesbian Community: Perceptual Differences of Senior Editors and Their Gay and Lesbian Staffers"[3]

"Daily Newspaper Coverage of the Gay and Lesbian Community: Perceptual Differences of Senior Editors and Their Gay and Lesbian Staffers," the first paper resulting from this study, focused on responses to the 26 items include in this survey and in the ASNE study. Views of senior editors differ from those of the gay and lesbian journalists who responded to the ASNE survey regarding many aspects of coverage, including even terminology used in stories about gays and lesbians. These differences emerged in their perceptions of quality of coverage, play of stories and treatment of such issues as violence against gays and lesbians, civil rights of gays and lesbians, and political activities of gays and lesbians. Differences over treatment of events of the local gay and lesbian community were especially strong. Senior editors interviewed for this study were, in general, less critical of coverage in all areas, with coverage of AIDS being the only exception, than were the gay and lesbian journalists surveyed for the ASNE study. The senior editors also were less sensitive about terminology used to describe lesbians and gays in newspaper coverage of issues and concerns of their community.

When asked whether they believed their newspaper devoted enough space to non-medical issues, slightly more than 42 percent of the senior editors said

no, but 83 percent of the gay and lesbian journalists said no.

When asked to evaluate their newspapers' overall coverage of issues of concern to gays and lesbians issues, 40 percent of the senior editors rated it "excellent" or "good," while only 29 percent of the gay and lesbian journalists gave those responses.

About 48 percent of senior editors rated their newspapers' play of stories of interest to gays and lesbians as "excellent" or "good," while only 32 percent of the gay and lesbian journalists gave it those ratings.

Neither the senior editors in this study nor the gay and lesbian journalists in the ASNE study suggested that censorship was a significant factor in determining coverage of the lesbian and gay community. Nearly 95 percent of the editors and a similar 91 percent of the journalists in the ASNE study said their papers had not chosen to ignore or kill a local story involving issues relating to lesbians and gays. More than 92 percent of the senior editors and 94 percent of the gay and lesbian journalists said censorship of national wire stories had not occurred.

When questions in this study turned to evaluation of their newspapers' coverage of specific issues, responses from senior editors diverged markedly from those of gay and lesbian journalists surveyed by ASNE, except for similar responses about coverage of AIDS and of lifestyles of lesbians and gays. About 70 percent of the senior editors and about 72 percent of the gay and lesbian journalists rated their newspapers' coverage of AIDS as "excellent" or "good." Only about 17 percent of the senior editors and of the gay and lesbian journalists in the two studies considered their newspapers' coverage of lifestyles of gays and lesbians as being "excellent" or "good."

The opinions of the two groups of respondents diverged, however, when asked about their newspapers' coverage of violence against gays and lesbians, civil rights of gays and lesbians, gay and lesbian rights legislation,

political activities of lesbians and gays and events of the local gay community. When asked to rate their newspapers' coverage of violence against gays and lesbians, about 31 percent of the senior editors and only about 23 percent of the lesbian and gay journalists in the ASNE study responded with "excellent" or "good." About 48 percent of the editors ranked their newspapers' coverage of civil rights of gays and lesbians as "excellent" or "good," compared to only 27 percent of the journalists in the ASNE study. In rating their newspapers' coverage of gay/lesbian rights legislation, 42 percent of the editors and 27 percent of the gay and lesbian journalists ranked it as "excellent" or "good." Asked about their newspapers' coverage of political activities of gays and lesbians, 33 percent of the senior editors but only 19 percent of the ASNE respondents considered it "excellent" or "good." About 27 percent of the senior editors in this survey but only 10 percent of the gay and lesbian journalists ASNE surveyed said their newspapers' coverage of events of the local gay and lesbian community was "excellent" or "good;" but, significantly, only 34 percent of the editors as compared with 63 percent of the journalists judged it "poor."

Senior editors in this study and lesbian and gay journalists in the ASNE study also were asked to apply several descriptors to their newspapers' typical reporting on the gay and lesbian community. With every descriptor, the editors painted a far rosier portrait of that reporting than did the gay and lesbian journalists in the ASNE study. Nearly 78 percent of the editors either strongly agreed or agreed that their newspapers' coverage of issues and concerns of gays and lesbians was "sensitive." In the ASNE study, 57 percent of the journalists interviewed strongly agreed or agreed that their newspapers' reporting was "sensitive."

In response to the remaining descriptors in this series of items, senior editors demonstrated an even more sanguine view of their newspapers' coverage

than did the gay and lesbian journalists in the ASNE study. About 92 percent of the editors but only 57 percent of the lesbian and gay journalists strongly agreed or agreed that their newspapers' coverage of those issues was "careful." Similarly, about 80 percent of the editors but only 53 percent of the ASNE respondents strongly agreed or agreed that their newspapers' coverage was "balanced." About 2 percent of the senior editors but 16 percent of the gay and lesbian journalists strongly agreed or agreed that their newspapers' coverage was "sensationalistic." When editors were asked if their newspapers' reporting was "complete," more than 38 percent agreed or strongly agreed and more than 33 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that their newspapers' reporting was "complete." In contrast, of the gay and lesbian journalists, only 13 percent strongly agreed or agreed while 72 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that their newspapers' reporting on issues and concerns of the gay and lesbian community was "complete."

The views of editors and the opinions of gay and lesbian journalists regarding preferred terminology to use in reporting on the gay and lesbian community differ every bit as much as did their responses about the quality of their newspapers' reporting on issues and concerns relating to gays and lesbians. Responses of the two groups to the use in reporting of the terms "gays and lesbians," "homosexual" and "people with AIDS" were strikingly different. When asked about use of "gays and lesbians," slightly more than 36 percent of senior editors judged this a "preferred term" and nearly 61 percent considered it an "acceptable term." In the ASNE study, 68 percent of gay and lesbian journalists judged "gays and lesbians" a "preferred term," and 29 percent considered it an "acceptable term." Asked about the term "homosexual," more than 8 percent of senior editors said it was a "preferred term," more than 76 percent said it was an "acceptable term" and more than 11 percent said it was a "prejudiced term." Of gay and lesbian journalists, 4 percent found it

a "preferred term," 59 percent found it an "acceptable term" and 31 percent found it a "prejudiced term." More than 26 percent of senior editors but 69 percent of lesbian and gay journalists in the ASNE study found "people with AIDS" a "preferred term." While more than 60 percent of the editors considered "people with AIDS" an "acceptable term," only 26 percent of gay and lesbian journalists rated it as an "acceptable term."

Findings from "Privacy and the AIDS Crisis: Newspaper Practices Regarding Obituaries and Outings"[4]

The first paper resulting from this study compared the differences and similarities between responses of senior newspaper editors and responses of lesbian and gay journalists to the same questions about their papers' coverage of gays and lesbians. The second paper from this study, "Privacy and the AIDS Crisis: Newspaper Practices Regarding Obituaries and Outings," examined the attitudes and perceptions of senior newspaper editors regarding the coverage of outings and the treatment of lesbians and gays in non-paid obituaries. Editors surveyed seemed to believe that one's status as a public figure or private citizen helped determine if the reporting of sexual orientation was newsworthy. Editors were more inclined to run AIDS as the cause of death in obituaries in the case of celebrities and public figures and rely on preferences of the deceased's family in the case of private citizens. The same held true for publication of sexual orientation. Editors tended to think that publishing the sexual orientation of public figures is generally not an invasion of their privacy and that reporting the outing of a public figure or of a person who has sought publicity is newsworthy. Generally editors felt that the person's public status makes him or her a legitimate subject of investigation.

Editors were asked about their newspaper's practice in reporting AIDS as a cause of death. When asked whether AIDS is reported in non-paid obituaries

when known as a cause of death, more than 40 percent said "always" or "usually" and nearly 55 percent said "rarely" or "never." When asked if their newspaper followed up by contacting the physician or a member of the family when AIDS was suspected as a cause of death, less than 30 percent of the editors said "always" or "usually" and 62 percent said "rarely" or "never."

Senior editors, however, seem willing to expand on what their papers include in non-paid obituaries. Nearly 70 percent "agree somewhat" or "strongly agree" that "in AIDS and AIDS-related deaths, principles of fair and accurate reporting require that obituaries and stories list the cause of death whenever possible." More than 84 percent "agree somewhat" or "strongly agree" that "in AIDS and AIDS-related deaths, obituaries and stories should report the cause of death if the deceased was well-known or a public figure"; and 77 percent "agree somewhat" or "strongly agree" that "in AIDS and AIDS-related deaths, obituaries and stories should report the cause of death if the deceased took an active stand against legislation advocated by gays and lesbians." More than 78 percent of the senior editors "disagree somewhat" or "strongly disagree" with the statement, "In AIDS and AIDS-related deaths, obituaries should omit the cause of death because AIDS carries a stigma not associated with other diseases." Still, 59 percent "agree somewhat" or "strongly agree" that "in AIDS and AIDS-related deaths, newspapers should honor family requests that the cause of death be omitted in obituaries and stories"; and nearly 75 percent "agree somewhat" or "strongly agree" that "in AIDS and AIDS-related deaths, decisions about reporting cause of death in obituaries and stories should be made on a case-by-case basis."

The majority of senior editors also think obituaries for lesbians and gays should include names of surviving lovers or partners. More than 90 percent "agree somewhat" or "strongly agree" that "obituaries for gays and lesbians should include the name of a longtime lover or domestic partner among

survivors if the family of the deceased requests it or if the deceased leaves instructions requesting it." Nearly 74 percent "agree somewhat" or "strongly agree" that "obituaries for gays and lesbians should include the name of a longtime lover or domestic partner among survivors if the deceased's lover requests it."

The recent tactic of outing public figures and the privacy issues it raises cause senior editors more difficulty than do obituaries of people with AIDS or of gays and lesbians. Senior newspaper editors were far less open to including people's sexual orientation in stories. While 80 percent of the senior editors "disagree somewhat" or "strongly disagree" with the extreme statement, "Publishing the sexual orientation of public figures is an unwarranted invasion of their privacy, no matter what the circumstances"; only 65 percent "agree somewhat" or "strongly agree" that "a demonstration by gays and lesbians at the office or home of a political candidate they are attempting to out is newsworthy and deserving of coverage." Of the senior editors, 60 percent "disagree somewhat" or "strongly disagree" that "when people seek publicity and status as public figures, their sexual preferences become a legitimate subject for investigation and publication"; and a similar 59 percent "disagree somewhat" or "strongly disagree" that "not reporting an outing of a public figure, when competing media do, would lose my newspaper credibility with its readers."

In terms of their newspaper's practice in covering outings, slightly more than 8 percent of the senior editors said their paper had a policy regarding reporting on outings. Only about 12 percent said their paper had "reported on demonstrations by gays and lesbians intended to out local politicians or public figures." More than 66 percent of the editors indicated their paper had reported on outings of national politicians or public figures.

Findings from "Tolerance of Senior Daily Newspaper Editors for Photographs of People with AIDS and Gays and Lesbians":

The third paper resulting from the survey, "Tolerance of Senior Daily Newspaper Editors for Photographs of People with AIDS and Gays and Lesbians," focuses on how senior editors view the use of photographs portraying patients in the privacy of an AIDS clinic and of lesbians or gays showing affection for one another in increasingly intimate circumstances--holding hands, embracing or kissing. The survey items presented the senior daily newspaper editors with descriptions of four photographs to which they were to respond with "strongly agree," "agree somewhat," "disagree somewhat" or "strongly disagree" that "it would not be appropriate for my newspaper to publish" them. The editors' responses to the photographs were also crosstabulated with their responses to other items on the survey.

The editors overwhelmingly disagreed with the suggestion that it would be inappropriate to publish any of the photographs described. They were, however, more reluctant to publish an affectionate, public photograph of gays or lesbians kissing than they were to invade the privacy of bed-ridden patients in an AIDS clinic. In response to the statement, "It would not be appropriate for my newspape to publish photographs of bed-ridden patients in an AIDS clinic," nearly 84 percent of the editors "strongly disagree" or "disagree somewhat." Nearly 89 percent "strongly disagree" or "disagree somewhat" that "it would not be appropriate for my newspaper to publish photographs of gays or lesbians holding hands." Nearly 86 percent of the editors "strongly disagree" or "disagree somewhat" that "it would not be appropriate for my newspaper to publish photographs of gays and lesbians embracing." But only slightly more than 75 percent of the editors "strongly disagree" or "disagree somewhat" that "it would not be appropriate for my newspaper to publish photographs of gays or lesbians kissing."

Responses of senior editors to demographic items on the survey, when crosstabulated with their responses to the four statements about intimate photographs of people with AIDS and of gays or lesbians, help define the characteristics of those editors most open to publishing photographs of gays or lesbians in their newspapers. Crosstabulation yielded some statistically significant associations at the $p < .05$ level and above.

As circulation rose, editors expressed increasing disagreement with the statements, indicating greater tolerance for publishing photographs of gay and lesbians holding hands, embracing and kissing. Nearly 78 percent of editors from papers under 50,000, for example, disagreed that photographs of gays or lesbians embracing would be inappropriate for their newspaper, but more than 87 percent of editors from papers of 50,000 to 199,999 and more than 94 percent of editors from papers above 200,000 disagreed. The same association held for photographs of gays or lesbians holding hands or kissing. The association was the same for the photograph of people with AIDS, but not at a significance level of $p < .05$.

City and metropolitan editors consistently were more tolerant than either managing editors or news editors of publishing any of the photographs of gays or lesbians showing affection to one another. For example, more than 81 percent of managing editors, those editors most interested in policy matters for their papers, and slightly more than 83 percent of news editors, those editors most concerned with technical aspects of editing their papers, disagreed that photographs of gays or lesbians holding hands would be inappropriate. However, nearly 94 percent of the city and metropolitan editors, those editors closest to the stories and reporters, disagreed with this statement. A similar pattern of associations held for the statements describing photographs of gays or lesbians embracing or kissing, with the difference becoming greater as the intimacy of the photograph being described

increased.

Those editors with post-baccalaureate education were less resistant to publishing the photographs than were editors who completed four or fewer years of education past high school. Slightly more than 68 percent of editors with four or fewer years past high school, for example, but more than 90 percent of those with five or more years disagreed with the statement, "It would not be appropriate for my newspaper to publish photographs of gays or lesbians kissing." Responses to the other the statements describing photographs of gays or lesbians holding hands or embracing produced a similar pattern of associations, and again the differences increased as the intimacy of the photographs described increased.

Crosstabulations with responses to items on the survey that asked editors' views of the effects of coverage of lesbians and gays and asked editors to evaluate their newspapers' coverage also resulted in statistically significant associations. Those editors who disagreed with the statement, "Society is so homophobic that publishing the names of gays and lesbians in any capacity can seriously harm their careers and personal lives," were more likely to tolerate publishing photographs of gays or lesbians showing affection toward each other. For photographs of gays or lesbians kissing, for example, less than 67 percent of those who agreed but 92 percent of those who disagreed about the danger posed by a homophobic society also disagreed that these photographs would be inappropriate for their papers. This pattern of association also held for statements describing photographs of gays or lesbians holding hands or embracing.

Those editors who felt identifying public figures as gay or lesbian "provides needed positive role models for young gays and lesbians," were more tolerant of publishing photographs of gays and lesbians kissing. Nearly 80 percent of editors who agreed also disagreed that photographs of gays or

lesbians kissing would be inappropriate. This was the case for only slightly more than 66 percent of editors who disagreed that identifying gays and lesbians provides positive role models.

In rating overall coverage of the lesbian and gay community and in rating coverage of particular issues and concerns of the lesbian and gay community by their newspapers, senior editors who rated their papers' coverage highly were more likely to disagree with the proposition that the four photographs would not be appropriate for their newspapers to publish than were editors who rated their papers' coverage poorly. In responses to the question, "Overall, how would you rate your newspaper's play of stories on issues and concerns relating to lesbians and gays?" for example, nearly 90 percent of editors who rated their papers' play of stories positively also disagree that the photographs of gays or lesbians kissing would be inappropriate; only 64 percent of those who rated their papers' play of stories negatively disagreed. The pattern of association was similar for the photographs of gays or lesbians holding hands or embracing. Nearly 88 percent of editors who rated their papers' reporting on issues and concerns relating to gays and lesbians" positively but only slightly more than 66 percent of editors who rated their papers' reporting negatively also disagreed that the photograph of gays or lesbians kissing would be inappropriate. Again the pattern of associations is similar for the photographs of gays or lesbians holding hands or embracing.

Of editors who rated their newspapers' coverage of the AIDS epidemic positively, nearly 88 percent disagreed that photographs of patients in an AIDS clinic would be inappropriate, more than 92 percent disagreed that photographs of gays or lesbians holding hands would be inappropriate, and more than 79 percent disagreed that photographs of gays or lesbians kissing would be inappropriate. Of editors who rated their newspapers' coverage of AIDS negatively, only slightly more than 73 percent disagreed that photographs of

patients in an AIDS clinic would be inappropriate, about 80 percent disagreed that photographs of gays or lesbians holding hands would be inappropriate, and slightly more than 66 percent disagreed that photographs of gays or lesbians kissing would be inappropriate.

Editors were asked to characterize how "imaginative," "aggressive," "biased," and "authoritative" was their newspapers' reporting on issues and concerns of gays and lesbians. Editors characterizing their papers' reporting positively were more tolerant of publishing the photographs of gays or lesbians holding hands, embracing, or kissing. For example, nearly 91 percent of editors who agreed that their papers' reporting on issues and concerns of gays and lesbians was "aggressive" disagreed that photographs of gays or lesbians kissing were inappropriate. About 70 percent of those saying that their papers' reporting was not "aggressive" also disagreed that such a photograph was inappropriate for their papers. This pattern of associations was similar for "imaginative" and "authoritative" and was the inverse for "biased."

Findings Reported in "Newspaper Coverage of Gays and Lesbians: Editors' Views of Its Longterm Effects"[6]

This paper, the fourth resulting from this survey, focuses on senior editors' attitudes about the effects of their coverage of gays and lesbians and their views of readers' ingrained attitudes about gays and lesbians. Specifically, the senior editors at daily newspapers were asked to respond to the following questions with "strongly agree," "agree somewhat," "disagree somewhat," or "strongly disagree":

> The more information readers have about issues and activities of concern to gays and lesbians, the more tolerant our society will become of gay lifestyles.
>
> Identifying business leaders, politicians, writers, sports heroes, and celebrities as being gay or lesbian provides needed positive role models for young gays and lesbians.

> Society's sentiments against gays and lesbians are so ingrained that, in the long run, media coverage will do little to change them.
>
> Society is so homophobic that publishing the names of gays and lesbians in any capacity can seriously harm their careers and personal lives.

Responses to demographic and other items on the survey were examined to see if statistically significant associations exist between them and responses to the four statements considered in this study. Significance was determined at the $p < .05$ level.

The senior editors surveyed seemed to believe, overall, that the media do shape the way viewers and readers think about gay lifestyles and gay issues. They also believe that attitudes of their audiences are not so ingrained that the media cannot change them over time. The editors also indicated that the identification of gay or lesbian celebrities, sports heroes, government officials and the like could provide positive role models. Editors were split, however, when asked if they believed a homophobic society might make it dangerous for gays and lesbians personally and professionally to be identified in the newspaper.

When asked their opinions about the statement, "The more information readers have about issues and activities of concern to gays and lesbians, the more tolerant our society will become of gay lifestyles," more than 37 percent of the editors strongly agreed, more than 47 percent agreed somewhat, more than 13 percent disagreed somewhat, and nearly 2 percent strongly disagreed.

When asked their opinions about the statement, "Identifying business leaders, politicians, writers, sports heroes and celebrities as being gay or lesbian provides needed positive role models for young gays and lesbians," more than 15 percent strongly agreed, more than 54 percent agreed somewhat, more than 25 percent disagreed somewhat, and more than 5 percent strongly disagreed.

Editors also indicated that media coverage can change the public's opinion of gays and lesbians. When asked about the statement, "Society's sentiments against gays and lesbians are so ingrained that, in the long run, media coverage will do little to change them," less than 6 percent strongly agreed, more than 18 percent agreed somewhat, nearly 60 percent disagreed somewhat, and 21 percent strongly disagreed.

Editors were more evenly divided in their opinions when asked about the homophobia of their readers. In response to the statement, "Society is so homophobic that publishing the names of gays and lesbians in any capacity can seriously harm their careers and personal lives," more than 11 percent strongly agreed, more than 37 percent agreed somewhat, more than 45 percent disagreed somewhat, and nearly 6 percent strongly disagreed.

Several statistically significant associations ($p < .05$) were found between editors' views about their own newspapers' coverage of issues of concern to gays and lesbians and their belief that newspapers do affect attitudes about gays and lesbians. Editors who were most critical of their newspapers' coverage of "political activities of gays and lesbians" were more likely to agree that "the more information readers have about issues and activities of concern to gays and lesbians, the more tolerant our society will become."

A significant relationship also was found between editors' critical views of coverage and their belief that media can change attitudes. Editors who did not think their newspapers devoted enough space to the non-medical concerns of gays and lesbians were most likely to agree that "identifying business leaders, politicians, writers, sports heroes, and celebrities as being gay or lesbian provides needed positive role models."

Those editors who disagreed that society is so homophobic that publishing the names of gays and lesbians can harm their careers or lives were

likely to be the most open about what they publish in some obituaries and in photographs. Editors who disagreed with the homophobia statement were more likely to include the name of a lover as a survivor in an obituary if the lover requests it, to disagree that a photograph of gays or lesbians holding hands or embracing is inappropriate in their newspaper, and to think their own newspaper's coverage of anti-gay violence is good.

Editors who were most open about what was appropriate to include in obituaries of people who died from AIDS or AIDS-related diseases were most likely to believe in strong effects of the media. Those editors who agreed that identifying gay leaders and celebrities in the newspaper creates role models for young lesbians and gays were most likely to disagree when asked if it would be inappropriate to publish a photograph of two gays or lesbians kissing. Editors who disagreed that media coverage will not change sentiments of readers also disagreed that AIDS as a cause of death should be omitted from obituaries because AIDS carries a stigma not associated with other diseases. Editors who disagreed that media coverage will not change sentiments also agreed that, in the obituaries of people with AIDS, a lover should be listed as survivor if the lover or the family requests it. Editors who felt that identifying public figures as gay or lesbian can create positive role models were more likely to agree that newspapers identify the sexual orientation of "a health-care provider known to have AIDS" or a person who "hypocritically supports legislation encouraging discrimination against gays and lesbians or solicits campaign funds from people and groups advocating intolerance of lesbians and gays."

Few or only very weak relationships could be found between the demographic data from the survey and responses of the senior editors to the four statements analyzed in this paper. One significant association, however, suggests that editors with 11 to 20 years of newspaper experience are the most

likely to believe that identifying gays and lesbians in the newspaper can harm them personally and professionally because society is so homophobic. This group is most likely to have been in college or just entering the newspaper industry during the social upheaval of the 1960s and 1970s. Editors with 20 or more years of newspaper experience are the least likely to agree with that statement.

New Findings on Senior Daily Newspaper Editors and the Reporting of Sexual Orientation

Faced with the efforts by ACT-UP and other gay and lesbian activists to out public figures, the willingness of the supermarket tabloids to publish these outings and the pressures of competitive media, mainstream editors increasingly find themselves deciding among competing values when publication of sexual orientation is an issue. While naturally inclined to provide the information readers seek about public figures, editors confront their journalistic bias against revealing private information they consider titillating and feel has little to do with the story. Additionally, they have been criticized for alternatively ignoring or stigmatizing gay and lesbian lifestyles, issues, concerns, and community events. This study, by presenting several scenarios based on actual cases, focuses on the views of senior newspaper editors regarding publication of the sexual orientation of public figures. The survey asked senior editors to "strongly agree," "agree somewhat," "disagree somewhat" or "strongly disagree" with sixteen statements about the appropriateness of identifying the sexual orientation of "public figures" in news coverage. The pattern that emerged in the editors responses to these statements generally favors identifying sexual orientation, especially in cases involving politicians and national public figures.

A large majority of the editors consider publication of sexual orientation often warranted. In response to the statement, "Publishing the sexual orientation of public figures is an unwarranted invasion of their

privacy, no matter what the circumstances," nearly 74 percent of the senior editors strongly disagreed or disagreed somewhat. An even larger majority think such publication is warranted in more instances than when an arrest is involved. In response to the statement, "Sexual orientation should be reported only when related to an arrest," nearly 87 percent of the editors strongly disagreed or disagreed somewhat. A somewhat smaller majority or the editors surveyed also think reporting sexual orientation is warranted in more cases than when the subject of the story reveals it. In response to the statement, "Sexual orientation should be reported only when the subject of the story acknowledges that he or she is gay or lesbian," more than 57 percent of the editors surveyed strongly disagreed or disagreed somewhat.

Simply seeking publicity or status as a public figure or simply having one's sexual orientation reported by competing media is not considered sufficient to warrant reporting sexual orientation by the editors surveyed. In response to the statement, "When people seek publicity and status as public figures, their sexual preferences become a legitimate subject for investigation and publication," more than 57 percent of the editors strongly disagreed or disagreed somewhat. More than 64 percent of the senior editors strongly disagreed or disagreed somewhat with the statement, "Not reporting an outing of a public figure, when competing media do, would lose my newspaper credibility with its readers."

One situation that a large majority of the senior editors do think warrants coverage is a demonstration attempting to "out" a political candidate. In response to the statement, "A demonstration by gays and lesbians at the office or home of a political candidate they are attempting to out is newsworthy and deserving of coverage," nearly 66 percent of the editors strongly agreed or agreed somewhat.

This willingness to publish sexual orientation appears, with one

exception, throughout editors' responses to a series of scenarios requiring editors to judge the appropriateness of publishing sexual orientation or identifying a person as gay or lesbian. Nearly 88 percent of the editors strongly agree or agree somewhat that "a newspaper may properly indicate a person's sexual orientation or identify a person as gay or lesbian when he or she hypocritically supports legislation encouraging discrimination against gays and lesbians or solicits campaign funds from people and groups advocating intolerance of lesbians and gays." This drops to 77 percent of the editors when "he or she is a public figure arrested on morals charges in a local vice raid" or "he or she is a celebrity, sports hero, business leader, congressman, or other public figure who dies from AIDS," and drops to more than 72 percent when "he or she is a nationally known public figure or politician identified as gay or lesbian in wire service stories and other media." There is a further drop to 64 percent of the editors when "he or she is a health-care provider known to have AIDS," to more than 58 percent when "he or she is a congressman living with a long-term partner" or when "he or she is a member of the Supreme Court or the President's Cabinet, the Vice President, a congressman, an adviser to a presidential candidate, the mayor, or the governor." Nearly 58 percent of the editors strongly agreed or agreed somewhat to identification when the subject of the story "is a political candidate who claims he or she has 'nothing to hide,' and nearly 53 percent strongly agreed or agreed somewhat to publication when the subject "is a priest, minister, teacher, day-care worker, juvenile court judge, or other child-care provider known to have AIDS."

The only variation on this overwhelming support for publication of sexual orientation came when the subject of the story "is a local public figure or politician identified as gay or lesbian by competing local media." In this case, more than 63 percent of senior editors strongly disagree or

disagree somewhat. While editors are understandably less willing to report sexual orientation of local public figures than national public figures, it seems that this scenario also presents editors with another opportunity express their unwillingness to be pushed into reporting sexual orientation simply because the competition does.

Other patterns of association emerged when the responses of senior newspaper editors to these statements were crosstabulated with demographic information about the editors surveyed and with their personal beliefs about society's views of gays and lesbians. The associations reported here (significant at the $p < .05$ level and above) indicate that editors do believe what they publish or do not publish shapes readers' attitudes about gays and lesbians. Editors in the mid-age group (36-44 years old) and in city and metropolitan editor positions seem particularly sensitive about the effects of what they print. Those editors who were critical of various aspects of their newspapers' coverage of gays and lesbians were the most open to what would be appropriate and were the most concerned about what competing media outlets run.

While only 37 percent of editors surveyed agreed that a newspaper identify "a local public figure or politician identified as gay or lesbian by competing local media," editors 36 to 44 years of age were more reluctant to identify the sexual orientation of local public figures than were editors 35 years and younger or those 45 years and older. Of editors 36 to 44 years of age, 29 percent said they would identify sexual orientation, compared to more than 42 percent of those 35 years and younger and more than 48 percent of those editors 45 years and older. This same 36-to-44 year-old group of editors also were more likely to agree that it is appropriate to identify public figures arrested in vice raids. While more than 77 percent of all editors surveyed agreed that a newspaper identify "a public figure arrested on morals

charges in a local vice raid," more than 84 percent of editors 36 to 44 years of age agreed, compared to more than 73 percent of those editors 35 years and under and more than 65 percent of those 45 years and older.

This trend among editors in the middle age range may relate to their having been in college or beginning their careers in the 1960s or 1970s. These editors may have been shaped dramatically by the social issues of the era and are perhaps more sensitive to the consequences of what they publish. For these editors in the mid-age group, there apparently is more respect for private lives of public figures as long as those private lives have little bearing on the story.

This is also borne out by the fact that city and metropolitan editors--again those more likely to be in the middle group (36 to 44)--were the least likely to consider an outing demonstration newsworthy. While nearly 67 percent of all the editors agreed "a demonstration by gays and lesbians at the office or home of a political candidate they are attempting to out is newsworthy and deserving of coverage, only about 59 percent of the city and metropolitan editors consider it newsworthy, compared to 60 percent of the news editors and nearly 80 percent of the managing editors surveyed. City and metropolitan editors also were less likely to identify the sexual orientation of local or national figures who are gay or lesbian. Although nearly 60 percent of the editors agreed that a newspaper identify "a member of the Supreme Court or the President's Cabinet, the Vice President, a congressman, an adviser to a presidential candidate, the mayor, or the governor," less than 50 percent of the city and metropolitan editors but 70 percent of the news editors and 68 percent of the managing editors agreed. While about 37 percent of the editors think it appropriate to identify the sexual orientation of local public figures, only 28 percent of city and metropolitan editors but more than 53 percent of news editors and nearly 39 percent of managing editors agreed.

Similarly, while nearly 59 percent of the editors agreed that a newspaper identify "a political candidate who claims he or she has 'nothing to hide,'" only about 48 percent of city and metropolitan editors but nearly 68 percent of managing editors and 70 percent of news editors agreed.

These managing editors may be older as a group than the city and metropolitan editors, and, again, were not in college or starting out in the news business during a time of great social upheaval. The city and metropolitan editors, in addition, are more responsible for the day-to-day operations of reporters and may be more sensitive to the consequences of what is published.

Editors at larger-circulation newspapers were not necessarily more likely to think it is appropriate to publish sexual orientation of public figures. The larger the paper, the less likely editors are to believe it is appropriate to identify the sexual orientation of public figures who have been identified in the wire services. Although about 72 percent of the editors agreed that newspapers identify the sexual orientation of "a nationally known public figure or politician identified as gay or lesbian in wire service stories or other media," nearly 84 percent of editors at newspapers with a circulation of under 50,000 and more than 68 percent of editors at newspapers of 50,000 to 199,999 circulation but only slightly more than 62 percent of editors at newspapers with more than 200,000 agreed. Similarly, the larger the newspaper, the less likely editors are to think it appropriate to publish names of those identified in vice raids. While 77 percent of the editors surveyed agreed that newspapers indicate sexual orientation of "a public figure arrested on morals charges in a local vice raid," more than 81 percent of editors at the smaller newspapers and more than 84 percent of editors at the mid-size newspapers but less than 65 percent of editors at the largest newspapers agreed.

Even though editors at the largest papers are less inclined to identify sexual orientation in these two circumstances, they are more likely to disagree with the statement that "Publishing the sexual orientation of public figures is an unwarranted invasion of their privacy, no matter what the circumstances." Nearly 74 percent of the editors surveyed disagreed with this statement. Nearly 62 percent of the editors from the smallest newspapers and 74 percent from the mid-size newspapers but 87 percent from the largest newspapers disagreed.

As might be anticipated, this greater reluctance of editors at larger newspapers to publish sexual orientation and greater likelihood to disagree that publishing sexual orientation is an invasion of privacy is a pattern repeated by editors at newspapers with competition--papers likely to have larger circulations. While more than 84 percent of editors at newspapers without competition agreed that newspapers identify the sexual orientation of "a public figure arrested on morals charges in a local vice raid," less than 72 percent of editors at newspapers with competition agreed. However, while 65 percent of editors at newspapers without competition disagreed with the statement that "publishing the sexual orientation of public figures is an unwarranted invasion of their privacy, no matter what the circumstances," this percentage increased to almost 80 percent for editors from newspapers with competition. It would seem that editors from the larger newspapers feel the sexual orientation of public figures and perhaps stories based on vice raids are not particularly newsworthy. At the same time, editors at larger papers seem to find it easier to envision circumstances that make sexual orientation essential to the story.

Whether editors majored in journalism in college also influenced their views on publication of sexual orientation. Those who majored in journalism were the most open to publishing sexual orientation. More than 48 percent of

the editors with journalism majors, for example, agreed that "when people seek publicity and status as public figures, their sexual preferences become a legitimate subject for investigation and publication." Less than 34 percent of editors with majors other than journalism agreed. While nearly 65 percent of editors with journalism majors agreed that newspapers indicate sexual orientation of "a member of the Supreme Court or the President's Cabinet, the Vice President, a congressman, an adviser to a presidential candidate, the mayor, or the governor," less than 48 percent of editors without journalism majors agreed. More than 63 percent of editors with a journalism major agreed that newspapers identify sexual orientation of "a congressman living with a longterm partner," but only slightly more than 49 percent of editors without a journalism major agreed. More than 81 percent of editors with a journalism major agreed that a newspaper identify the sexual orientation of "a public figure arrested on morals charges in a local vice raid." Slightly less than 70 percent of editors without journalism majors agreed.

Another major pattern associated with how editors respond to publishing sexual orientation involves how editors evaluate their newspaper's coverage of issues and concerns of the gay and lesbian community. Editors who are critical of their newspaper's coverage generally are more open to publishing sexual orientation of public figures than are editors who evaluate their newspaper's coverage of gays and lesbians positively. For example, nearly 42 percent of editors who rated their paper's reporting on lesbians and gays as "fair" or "poor" but slightly more than 26 percent who rated their paper's reporting on gays as "excellent" or "good" agreed that "not reporting an outing of a public figure, when competing media do, would lose my newspaper credibility with its readers." Similarly, 42 percent of editors who rated their newspaper's play of stories on lesbians and gays as "fair" or "poor" but only slightly less than 29 percent of editors who rated it "excellent" or "good" agreed that "not

reporting an outing of a public figure, when competing media do, would lose my newspaper credibility with its readers." This divergence between the responses of critical versus laudatory editors regarding the loss of credibility when an outing is not reported by their papers also appears when editors are asked about coverage of particular issues of concern to lesbians and gays. More than 43 percent of editors critical of their coverage of gay civil rights but only slightly more than 26 percent of editors praising this coverage, more than 39 percent of editors critical of their coverage of anti-gay violence but only slightly more than 23 percent of those praising this coverage and, nearly 44 percent of editors critical of their coverage of gay rights legislation but only 20 percent of those praising this coverage agree that "not reporting an outing of a public figure, when competing media do, would lose my newspaper credibility with its readers." Agreement with this statement breaks down similarly when editors are asked to evaluate how "imaginative" is "their newspaper's typical reporting on issues and concerns relating to lesbians and gays." Nearly 40 percent of editors rating their newspaper's reporting unimaginative but only slightly more than 22 percent of those rating it imaginative agreed not reporting an outing of a public figure would lose credibility. Clearly, editors critical of their newspaper's coverage believe more information should be published about gays and lesbians. These critical editors also believe that competition will improve their own coverage and are concerned about what the competition prints. Those editors who praise their newspapers' coverage have a certain pride of coverage, perhaps satisfaction with coverage, that leads them to dismiss, to some degree, what other media outlets are doing--or at least claim they dismiss it.

This association between critical editors and greater interest in publishing sexual orientation of public figures appears extensively in responses to the statement, "A newspaper may properly indicate a person's

sexual orientation or identify a person as gay or lesbian when he is a priest, minister, teacher, day-care worker, juvenile court judge, or other child-care provider known to have AIDS." More than 58 percent of editors who rate their newspaper's reporting on issues and concerns relating to lesbians and gays as "fair" or "poor" but only slightly more than 43 percent of editors rating that reporting "excellent" or "good" agreed. Nearly 60 percent of editors who rated their newspaper's play of stories on issues and concerns relating to gays and lesbians as "fair" or "poor" but less than 45 percent of editors who rated it "excellent" or "good" agreed. This statement regarding publishing the sexual orientation of child-care providers yielded a similar pattern among editors asked to evaluate coverage of particular issues of concern to lesbians and gays. Nearly 61 percent of editors critical but only slightly more than 43 percent of editors laudatory of their newspaper's coverage of gay civil rights and nearly 57 percent of editors critical but slightly more than 35 percent of editors laudatory of their newspaper's coverage of gay lifestyles agreed that newspapers identify sexual orientation of child-care providers known to have AIDS. More than 57 percent of editors rating their reporting on issues and concerns of lesbians and gays as unimaginative but less than 39 percent of those rating it imaginative agreed that newspapers identify sexual orientation of child-care providers known to have AIDS. This greater interest of critical editors in publishing sexual orientation also emerged in responses to the statement that newspapers identify sexual orientation of "a public figure arrested on morals charges in a local vice raid" and to statements that "a demonstration by gays and lesbians at the office or home of a political candidate they are attempting to out is newsworthy and deserving of coverage" and that "sexual orientation should be reported only when the subject of the story acknowledges that he or she is gay or lesbian."

The majority of the editors in this study (more than 52 percent)

disagreed with the statement, "Society is so homophobic that publishing the names of gays and lesbians in any capacity can harm them"; but generally those editors who disagreed were still more reluctant to identify the sexual orientation of public figures than those editors who agreed with the statement. Nearly 61 percent of editors who agreed but less than 43 percent of those who disagreed with this statement also agreed that newspapers identify the sexual orientation of a "priest, minister, teacher, day-care worker, juvenile court judge, or other child-care provider known to have AIDS." Nearly 46 percent of the editors who agreed but only 27 percent of those who disagreed with the statement also agreed that "not reporting an outing of a public figure, when competing media do, would lose my newspaper credibility with its readers." Seventy-four percent of the editors who agreed with the statement about homophobia but only slightly more than 59 percent of editors who disagreed also agreed that "a demonstration by gays and lesbians at the office or home of a political candidate they are attempting to out is newsworthy and deserving of coverage." Despite this trend, only slightly more than 49 percent of editors who disagreed with the statement about homophobia but more than 65 percent of editors who agreed also agreed that newspapers identify the sexual orientation of "a congressman living with a long-term partner." Although this variation in the pattern of associations seems contradictory on its surface, it may be explained by differences in the types of people involved in these scenarios. There is a basic difference between identifying the sexual orientation of a child-care provider and a congressman. One is a private person, the other a public person; the editors who discount the potential of a homophobic society to harm gays and lesbians may also discount its potential to harm congressmen. In addition, they may also believe there is news value when a congressman is involved that does not exist when child-care provider is the subject of the story. This may be a pattern

similar to that found among editors from the largest newspapers who did not think private lives were particularly newsworthy.

Discussion

What can be concluded from the analyses that have resulted from this study thus far regarding how daily newspaper editors view coverage of the gay and lesbian community and its issues and concerns?

Clearly editors think their newspapers do a far better job of covering this community than gay and lesbian journalists do.

Editors are not particularly opposed to covering lesbians and gays, they simply are not sure how to do so, and they are ignorant of the issues, concerns, preferences, and events of the gay and lesbian community. This makes editors particularly interested in information about covering gays and lesbians and probably open to story ideas. Editors certainly know they need to be "sensitive" to this community.

Editors believe their newspapers affect readers' attitudes, and they believe providing information about gays and lesbians will make society less homophobic.

Editors recognize the AIDS epidemic as an important story, but often they confuse or substitute coverage of AIDS for coverage of the gay community. Since men outnumbered women three to one in this study, the senior editors interviewed in many cases probably confused coverage of AIDS with coverage of lesbians, too.

Editors are more inclined to indicate AIDS as a cause of death in the cases of public figures or celebrities than of private individuals, and they are more inclined to honor the request of families about the content of obituaries than requests of partners.

Editors are more inclined to indicate sexual orientation in cases of

public figures, especially national ones, than for private individuals; and they are more likely to report outings of national public figures than of local public figures.

Editors are extremely protective of their illusion of independence. They want to make decisions about covering gays and lesbians on a "case-by-case" basis, and they contend that what competing media covers does not influence their editorial decisions.

Editors have few reservations about publishing photographs of people with AIDS.

Editors claim to have few reservations about publishing photographs of gays or lesbians demonstrating affection for one another, but they will think twice before publishing a photo of gays or lesbians kissing.

Editors on large-circulation newspapers and on papers with competition are more open to stories and photographs about lesbians and gays.

City and metropolitan editors are more tolerant of stories and photographs about gays and lesbians and they are also more concerned about harm to identified lesbians and gays in a homophobic society than are either news editors or managing editors.

Editors who worry about harming gays and lesbians by publishing sexual orientation are more open, no matter how contradictory it seems, to publishing stories about gays and lesbians. The same is true of editors who think publishing sexual orientation provides positive role models.

Editors generally think demonstrations to out political candidates are newsworthy. They also generally believe that newspapers should identify the sexual orientation of hypocrites who are gay or lesbian yet advocate discriminatory legislation and support groups advocating intolerance.

Editors who rate their newspapers' coverage of gays and lesbians positively are more open to publishing stories about gays and lesbians, but

editors who are critical of their paper's coverage are more willing to publish sexual orientation and report on outings.

Editors with graduate course work are more open to stories about lesbians and gays.

Editors who were journalism majors are less sensitive to the effect of publishing sexual orientation than are editors who majored in another discipline.

Editors at larger circulation newspapers are less likely to think someone's sexual orientation is particularly newsworthy.

Editors who were in college or began their journalism careers in the socially turbulent 1960s and 1970s, who grew up during the modern gay rights movement, are more open to stories about gays and lesbians. They are also the most sensitive to the harm a homophobic society can cause identified lesbians and gays and are more reluctant to reveal sexual orientation, except in the case of public officials or in the unique case of public figures caught up in a vice raid. This group of editors includes many city and metropolitan editors, editors with 11-to-20 years of experience, and editors 36-to-44 years old.

If the goal is to out a public figure, pitch the story to an older managing editor who majored in journalism and works on a daily with less than 200,000 circulation.

If the goal is positive coverage of events in the lesbian and gay community, pitch the story to a city or metropolitan editor between 36 and 44 years of age who did not major in journalism and works on a daily with more than 200,000 circulation.

Plans for Further Research

Roy Aarons has talked with the authors about a joint research project

involving lesbian and gay readership of the daily newspaper. This study would utilize the strengths of the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association and its chapters and the Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University. Such a study seems a natural outgrowth of the ASNE research on gay and lesbian journalists' evaluation of the daily newspaper and this study of senior editors' views of their newspapers' coverage of the gay and lesbian community. These studies have provided the views of those people who produce the daily newspaper. What is needed now is a study of how gay and lesbian consumers of the newspaper evaluate and use their daily newspapers in a multi-media environment.

What has been discussed is a study that would focus on about 25 major metropolitan areas offering a range of ownership patterns from single-newspaper cities through two-newspaper-one-owner cities, two-newspaper-JOA cities, and truly competitive cities. One-newspaper cities under consideration include: Baltimore; Cleveland and Columbus, Ohio; Los Angeles; Miami; Portland, Oregon; St. Louis; and San Jose. Two-newspaper-single-owner cities include: Atlanta; Milwaukee; Philadelphia; and Vancouver, British Columbia. Two-newspaper-JOA cities include: Cincinnati, Detroit, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, and Seattle. Truly competitive newspaper cities include: Boston, Chicago, Denver, Houston, Minneapolis-St. Paul, New York, Toronto, and Washington.

The study would be tripartite and simultaneous, including a mail questionnaire to lesbians and gays living in the selected cities, a telephone survey of "mainstream" readers in the selected cities, and a content analysis of the newspapers in the selected cities. The mail questionnaire to lesbian and gay readers, using a sample drawn from a broker's mailing list, would ask many of the same questions evaluating coverage that appeared in the ASNE and the authors' surveys, but would also ask subscriber, readership and advertiser

loyalty questions designed--along with standard demographics--to profile how the respondent uses the daily newspaper as part of a media mix that includes alternative press and mainstream publications, gay and lesbian community publications, public and commercial broadcast, and so forth. The telephone survey would focus on how mainstream readers evaluate coverage of gays and lesbians in the daily newspaper and how tolerant or resistant these readers are of increased coverage of issues, concerns, and events of the lesbian and gay community. The content analysis would measure the kind, amount, positioning, and character of news about gays and lesbians appearing in the daily newspapers in the selected cities.

At this point, the authors have about $3,400 to support the mail questionnaire, the probability that the Bush Research Center at Ohio University will fund the telephone questionnaire and the possibility of interesting a masters or doctoral student in participating as part of his or her research for a thesis or dissertation. Since this study would be most effective if all three parts of the project occur approximately at the same time, additional funding will be necessary to support at least one graduate assistant for a year ($7,500 a student) and considerable mailing costs. Roy Aarons has suggested there might be money for this from a newspaper foundation.

The input and participation of members and chapters of the NLGJA will contribute immeasurably to this study's value to the newspaper industry, to better coverage of lesbians and gays and, hopefully, to better understanding of the relationship of declining newspaper readership and minority neglect by daily newspapers. Questionnaires and content analysis coding sheets have not been completed; NLGJA's suggestions for these instruments would be invaluable. Just as important to this project's success is NLGJA participation in the preservation and content analysis of six-to-eight weeks of gay and lesbian

coverage from daily newspapers in most of the selected cities. If you are interested in participating in either questionnaire development or content analysis, please sign up on the tablet that is circulating in the audience and will be available throughout the conference.

Notes

[1]This study was supported with funding from the Bush Research Center, E. W. Scripps School of Journalism, Ohio University, Guide H. Stempel III, director.

[2]Loren Ghiglione, et. al., Alternatives: Gays & Lesbians in the Newsroom (Washington, D. C.: American Society of Newspaper Editors, 1990). Ted Pease summarized the results of this study from Leroy F. Aarons, "Survey Brings A Minority into Focus for First Time," Alternatives, pp. 7-27, in "Alternatives: Gays & Lesbians in the Newsroom," Newspaper Research Journal, 11(3):38-49 (Summer 1990).

[3]The full text of the paper summarized here was presented to the Newspaper Division at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Boston, Ma., 7-10 August 1991, ERIC, ED 336 797. An edited version of this paper also will appear in a forthcoming issue of Newspaper Research Journal.

[4]The full text of the paper summarized here was presented to the Mass Communication and Society Division at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Boston, Ma., 7-10 August 1991, ERIC, ED 336 801.

[5]The full text of the paper summarized here will be presented to the Visual Communication Division at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Montreal, Canada, 5-8 August 1992, and will be available through ERIC.

[6]The full text of the paper summarized here will be presented to the Commission on the Status of Women at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Montreal, Canada, 5-8 August 1992, and will be available through ERIC.